



George H. Ambrose Papers (R0641)

Collection Number: R0641

Collection Title: George H. Ambrose Papers

Dates: 1858-1924

Creator: Ambrose, George H., c. 1821-1897

Abstract: The George H. Ambrose Papers contain the personal and business papers of George H. Ambrose, a county judge of Lafayette County, Missouri, and president of the Lexington & St. Louis Railroad Company. The collection includes correspondence, legal and business papers, memoranda books, and bank account books.

Collection Size: 0.25 cubic foot
(6 folders)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Rolla](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at rolla@shsmo.org. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

Restrictions on Use: The Donor has given, assigned, and transferred to the University all copyrights, and associated rights the Donor may possess in the materials.

Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *George H. Ambrose Papers* (R0641); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Rolla [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Rolla].

Donor Information: This collection was loaned for photocopying to the University of Missouri by Moark Regional Railroad Museum on August 14, 1991 (Accession No. RA0517). Additions were donated by Moark Regional Railroad Museum on August 15, 1991 (Accession No. RA0518).

Other Finding Aid: An item level index of the correspondence is available in the collections administration folder.

Processed by: Processed by John F. Bradbury, September 2, 1998. Revised by Aaron Schmidt, May 2020.

Biographical Note:

George H. Ambrose was born circa 1821, in Ohio to George and Hannah *Hill* Ambrose. Trained as a doctor, he had moved to Lafayette County, Missouri prior to the Civil War. He married Ellen Hill in 1847 and together they had seven children. After her death in 1871, George remarried in 1872 to Olivia Branham. They had one child together before they divorced. After scandal led him to leave Missouri and settle in Florida he married for a third time to Stella Thompson in 1878. Thirty years his junior, the couple had three children together.

On May 5, 1869, Ambrose was elected president of the Lexington & St. Louis Railroad. This road had been chartered in 1859 to run from Lexington to a junction with the Pacific Railroad of Missouri at Sedalia. Bonds were issued before the Civil War, but no work was completed before the conflict. The railroad project was taken up again after the war. Construction began on the Lexington & St. Louis on May 18, 1869. In 1870, the directors negotiated an agreement by which the road was leased to the Pacific Railroad. Ambrose and others also formed a joint stock corporation to build a railroad hotel in Lexington. Irregularities in the issue of the railroad company's bonds provoked political controversy and resultant litigation which lasted for years.

In 1871, Judge Ambrose and Judge E. W. Washburne of Pettis County were indicted for fraud in connection with the sale of railroad bonds. Although Washburne was acquitted and the charges against Ambrose were dropped in 1872, a historian of Lafayette County stated flatly that "the people were betrayed by their most trusted servants." The hotel project also failed. Ambrose moved to Bronson, Florida, in 1876. Although his reputation in Lafayette County may have been sullied by the controversy surrounding the railroad, he took with him letters of introduction from Dr. J. G. Russell and A. J. Hall.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged into two series:

Correspondence
Business Papers

Scope and Content Note:

Correspondence

This series contains personal, family, and business correspondence. The Ambrose collection provides a unique source for research on one of the most controversial railroad projects in mid-Missouri. Folder 1 contains correspondence regarding the railroad and the Lexington hotel projects. Among the significant correspondents were D. R. Garrison and R. R. Powell of the Pacific Railroad of Missouri; T. B. Edgar, the fiscal agent of the Lexington & St. Louis; L. H. Waters of Carrollton, Missouri; and George S. Rathbun of Lexington. Folder 2 contains later correspondence of Ambrose's family, much of which was written to his daughter, Claudia Ambrose, in Florida. This series is arranged in chronological order.

Business Papers

This series contains Ambrose's legal and business papers. Many of them concern railroad and real estate matters, both official and personal. The memoranda books in folder 5 and the bank account books from the Aull Savings Bank in folder 6 also concern personal business matters as well as those associated with Ambrose's duties as president of the Lexington & St. Louis. This series is arranged by material type.

Container List:

f. 1-2		George E. Ambrose papers
Box 001	f. 1	Correspondence, 1858-1889
	f. 2	Correspondence, 1896-1924
f. 3-6		Business Papers
Box 002	f. 3	Legal papers, 1866-1874
	f. 4	Business papers, 1867-1875
	f. 5	Memoranda books, 1864-1890
	f. 6	Bank account books, 1869-1871

Index:

Index Term	Folder
Adringer, J. H.	4
Ambrose, Aletta S.	3
Ambrose, Claudia, 1880-1947	2
Ambrose, George H., c. 1821-1897	1-6
Aull, Robert H., 1807-1878	4, 6
Aull Savings Bank (Lexington, Mo.)	4, 6
Boggs, William R.	1
Bridge, Hudson E.	1
Chiles, William H.	3
Daniels, Clifton B.	3
Davis, Llewellyn	1
Easter, Emanuel	3
Edgar, Timothy Bloomfield, 1815-1905	1
Edgar & Aull	4
Garrison, Daniel Randall, 1815-1896	1
Garrison, O. F.	1
Garrison & Currier	1, 4
Green, A.	1
Greenwood, Dan F.	1
Hedges, H. N.	1
Higgins, H. J.	1
Hill, Leroy W.	3-4

Index Term	Folder
Jeffries, B. F.	1
Jones, John B.	2-3
Lafayette County (Mo.)	1, 3-4
Leighton, George E.	1
Letton, N. W.	1
Lexington (Mo.)	1, 3-4
Lexington & St. Louis Railroad	1, 3-6
Limrick, William	6
Marshall & Easter	4
McMee, A. W.	1
McPherson, William M.	1
Miller, W. A.	1
Mirick, John L.	1
Mulkey family	3-4
Pacific Railroad of Missouri	4
Patterson, Lafayette	3-4
Patterson, P. C.	3-4
Pettis County (Mo.).	1
Pollard, I. J.	1
Potts, Charles	4
Powell, R. R.	1
R. M. Renick & Company	4
Railroads--Missouri	1, 3-6
Rathbun, George S. (Solon), 1829-1907	1
Reed, Elvina M.	3
Reed, Isaac	3
Rigney, Alice H.	3, 6
Rigney, James	3-4, 6
Roberts, Joseph	3
Russell, James G., 1824-1890	1
Smithson, Harvey D.	3-4
Thompson, Adelia, 1854-1947	2
Tyner, William P.	1
Washburn, E. W., 1814-1899	1, 3
Waters, L. H.	1
William Morrison & Company	4
Wilson & Ballard	4